

# GROWTH GROUPS

November 25, 2012

**Matthew 5:6; II Chronicles 6:19-21; Colossians 3:15-17**

**Conversation Starter:** Have you ever been so hungry that you proclaimed that you thought you would die if you didn't get something to eat soon? Have you ever been so thirsty that you were on the verge of dehydration? Think about that set of circumstances. What did you think was the answer that would satisfy such hunger and thirst? Thanksgiving is an interesting time for the Church to consider hungering and thirsting because for most of us we over-consume during this holiday. Why such a disconnect?

**Understanding:** Most of us have seen the TV commercial that tells us to "Obey Your Thirst!" That commercial is telling people to do whatever it takes to get a particular soft-drink. But the media and advertising world both wants us to obey our thirst and they want to be the one creating thirst. The Beatitudes tell us that those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be filled and satisfied (Mt. 5:6). The Psalmist gives us a picture of a deer panting for water and then says that his soul longs for God in the same way. What does that feel like? The world is determined to create an atmosphere of discontent and a lack of satisfaction. The world wants us to want stuff. This Thanksgiving season people will line up outside of stores for hours to get stuff to satisfy a shopping frenzy of desire...we call it Black Friday. Many retail stores will define the success of their whole year around such days of hunger and thirst. But life tells us that even after success in this shopping environment most people will not be either happy or satisfied. Augustine, the great early theologian said that, "There is a God shaped hole within us that can only be filled by God." There is a great contrast between the hunger and thirst that the world speaks of and that which the scripture speaks of as hungering and thirsting for righteousness and for God.

## Questions

1. Why does the scripture tell us that those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be "blessed"? Considering all the things that the world tries to make us hungry and thirsty for...what does this beatitude mean to people, two thousand years later?
2. Why does Thanksgiving and Black Friday make us consider the words of this Beatitude a bit more closely than usual? Do you ever take the opportunity to consider your hungers and thirsts? Why is this so challenging to us in America?
3. What does it feel like to be "filled" and "blessed" by God? Why is it so hard to be content and satisfied in this world?

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